seeds BLOG ENTRIES
2008-2010

Margit Galanter

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These writings were culled from a blog (now-defunct) that was set up for SEEDS Festival 2008 by Tamara Ashley, called a ning site. The intention was to have a shared space for archiving, reflecting, and communicating about the events and experiences of SEEDS Festival 2008. These are a facet of selections of a live and shared space that was enacted over several years, and a part of a voluminous amount of archival writing, performance, video, audio footage over the festival's life 2008 - 2016 .

E-mail Conversation about SEEDS Research Project between Patrice and Margit

April 29, 2010
From: Patrice Shakti Bacal
Date: Sat, Apr 24, 2010

Hi there,

Well, I am currently working on a project that is about the sacred bloods of womanhood including those of birth, abortion, menses, and more. This will hopefully come to fruition as a multi media piece incorporating graphic imagery of some of these processes as well as my own poetry and many other women's stories in their own voices which I (and possibly other women) will be dancing 'to'. I

intend for this project to conjure up (and work with skillfully) the collective grief that women experience in the center of our being ~ the womb.

Currently my project does not include an earthen or eco-element to it, although I do wish to perform this ritual outdoors if possible and on the earth. And I have been wondering about how my project neglects the fact that the earth is part of the *collective womb* as well. As eco-feminism teaches us, women are the body of the earth.
SO, finally what I want to ask is this:
If I attend the SEEDS festival, I will be participating in a personal research project mid-week as well as a couple of the workshops. Does my research project need to be ecologically AND movement based? Or can I come with this project I've described and see what emerges? I just want to make sure that I am a good fit for this community. I also don't understand the scientific element of this gathering. One of the words that "SEEDS" translates into is science, which I have little interest in at this point in my project...
Let me know your thoughts!

Thank you,
Patrice Shakti Bacal

On Wed, Apr 28, 2010 at 9:47 AM, margit galanter wrote:

Hi Patrice,

My name is Margit, and I am one of the curators of the SEEDS Festival and co-founder of the project. I thought I would take a moment to answer your questions. They are all actually deeply relevant to the curiosities and investigations of SEEDS, and I am getting the sense that your presence at the Festival could be a good match. Ultimately, of course, it is up to you!

In terms of your research project, it sounds mighty, indeed. Our Community Day event is an al-ages thing, so we would have to make

sure that it would be ok if some youth tromped by if you end up presenting on Saturday. Sounds doable, and as curators we could work that our for sure. Over the past few years that we have been organizing SEEDS, we have found that artistic research projects have tackled and worked with the concept of ecology in some varied ways--- some do historical and geological research with an expert, others draw from their own integrative practices, some touch on the question of ecology directly, and others still make work on the land and see what enters into their process. We are open to all interpretations, and the pleasure of being a part of SEEDS from the ground up has been to see all the variations and imagine them as a kind of ecosystem. So on that front, I think you are golden.

On a separate note, I just heard Slavoj Zizek, a cultural theorist and philosopher, make a great argument to question the concept of ecology AT ALL. More on that later....I am intrigued, and synthesizing.

In terms of the Science question, this has also been another one of our big areas of conversation. Science has several interpretations. For some, it represents a mode of research, for others a cultural and historical tradition whose peer review and standards lays a foundation for us to add on to, others see science's ideological glitches, racism and pratfalls as dominant. We have wondered at seeds about where the "hard" sciences and the "soft" sciences feed together, and how artist/investigatory research fits in with the term.

Personally, I am an advocate of somatic experimentations as a "first person science," that it is all the work of people doing their artistic, contemplative, and creative research *in the context of dialog and observation* that will move our understanding of research and science to be more inclusive of the lived, situated, and shared experience, and in turn that scientific research in form and content can offer some great mechanisms that will help in art. All this to say, if we are creative in our

approaches, we could create some great new ways of working with the land.

Where your start in your questions to us are very exciting and might develop in your time with the support of the event. There is a lot to say here, and SEEDS could be a good place to find yourself in the question, and see how it nourishes your project. All this to say, you might be surprised that the land offers you something, and you may find that the science part does not appeal to you, but the proposition of SEEDS as a concept enriches your work.

Thanks for asking, feel free to follow up if need be.

*I would love to put this on our ning site. Let me know if you would be willing for me to post it.
Have you joined yet? http://seedsfestival.ning.com/
And if you are on Facebook, we have a page there too, SEEDS Festival

I hope to meet you this summer!

Warmth,
Margit

On Wed, Apr 28, 2010, patrice wrote back:

Thank you so much for your thoughtful response and for expressing encouragement in my project. I am inspired by what you've written and I am definitely considering coming. At this point it feels like it really would be a supportive environment for me to explore my project, I am just weighing out some other options. If I do attend, we'll talk about Saturday's event and children being there. I may opt out of presenting. As a mother, I am sensitive to exposing children to intense emotional content. If my project unfurls in the way I envision and feel it within, it will be graphic and provocative for sure...

You are welcome to post this conversation on the ning page. I will join and also will join the facebook group. Thanks again!

Excited!

Northumbria Conference on Sustainability, Ecology + the Moving Body

January 22, 2009

here i am on skype participating at this conference. I can not hear much. It is a good attempt to be a part of the linkages yet experiencing the challenges of being in different places. Some great conversations on scientific/art experiments.

Musings Tonight on SEEDS 08 becoming 09

December 29, 2008

I am working on transcribing an interview with Arawana Hayashi and Jennifer Monson, where Teresa and I were a part with Melinda on video....It is very live with views. The weekend in SEEDS that was the Moving Arts Festival, 2008.

To transcribe, like any act, is embodied. Here I sit at the keyboard, keying into people speaking keying into their nature and the environment.....noticing the crick of my neck and I move to find the spot where I become most engaged....with the computer. the multiple screens, one of the image of the experience, and the second, the translation of the movement/moving image- the words they are to become (in this incarnation). With the indescribably delightful gestures of these people who are dedicated to their

work, their practice. I notice how I steer the conversation with my questions, composing, or making attempts. And here I am in another form, another time, another space (site), taking it in by typing it out. Whoah.

When Arawana says words such as
"what it is, what makes it bagaku" and "how you would balance the world" - it's all in the physicality- i can see so clearly what she means.....I wish i had the technology to show you....let me try:

Here is Jennifer saying: "I couldn't survive for a second"

- nah, it doesn't transfer as a still.....later. Later when my computer is run by photovoltaic and I dry my clothes 100% on the line, when I learn that program better and then.
Anyhow, there are Arawana's gestures for "goddess" and balance and bagaku and Jennifer's for questioning the American macho myth of the untainted wilderness all in on piece.... amazing. And to take the words out of context would be a crime, and an act of art- a poetic thievery- to transform the multiple translations referring upon themselves, and at some point the hope is it gains new life- these are renewable resources we have here!

And today on the phone with Melinda and Olive, after watching the skype interview of Olive today, and speaking with some amazing people who are dedicated to social ecology and the eco arts movement....I can almost touch it....

Propagation. turning the seeds of ideas into new myths. With Marlon in the interview questioning the viability of the spiritual in art (oh I do reduce!), and then this brilliant rubbing of ritual and myth-breaking all in the same place- nature as a myth, the culture/nature question. Am I back in semiotics? Olive speaking of the power of learning - this slippery interaction between not knowing, and the courage to ask questions, the curiosity and the seeking to put the pieces together- we are all

making our own myths constantly- purity as a concept to break, purity as a place we are born into and the mind obfuscates what we know..Ah I love to go in this game, and then the materiality of actual design that can be efficient or even damn brilliant, essays in the rough draft of Living Now.

And I swear I even leave the house....Oh, I loved the holidaze as they shift into the shore of work- what is work and what is life work? When does it feel like a job, and just to say that word my body recoils. Luckily and gracefully, it is far far away. I will go back now to the text.

(replace "text" with x with interview with location with platform with architectonics with the seed with the garden.....

What are we doing here? transformation? knowledge? Integration? Embodiment.

I wrote this at first to pass along an article that Arawana mentioned (mentions if you are living where I am write now....) Gary Snyder and the deep world and dance:
Writers and the war against nature:It's in shambhala sun and I can't get the links to show, so if you are interested, please google it, that's how I found it.

Buenos Aires Ecologists learn about SEEDS & CI

November 10, 2008

Andrea Uchitel is presenting some SEEDS research at a conference for ecologists. Below is her description (in Spanish) re: CI, and I also include some thoughts I had regarding SEEDS and Science that might be interesting for you to read, and that I passed on to her. I look forward to the day where I sit down and really get into the depths of what was learned.....

Andrea said:

I have the idea of organizing a short journey for scientists, spetially some friends working in ecology, that I would like to introduce to CI. My idea is to make a presentation of what happened in SEEDS, (I am slowly looking to the videos, taking sme notes....), and what CI is about, introduce some terms of the arts and dance, then invite a CI teacher to give a introductory lesson, so involve scientist on contact and dance embodiement (something similar made Susan Sgorbati) and later, share a "mate" and a discussion, let´s see what quid of maps they draw...
So I am slowly listenning to the videos and paying attention to ideas,...

HOla Todos,
Mar, Isa, Pedro, Esteban, Geno, Grisel, Ceci, Eli, Juan Ma, Marti, Fabri, Willie, María, Maria, Pato, Bigan, Gonza, Gundolf y
Y Hola Dani, que nos guiará en esta experiencia,

Este Domingo, Jornada de Introducción al Contact para Ecólogos. Porque si los bailarines del norte se meten con la ecología, los ecólogos del sur nos metemos con la danza. Experiencias complementarias.Estemos preparados para sumergirnos en el contact y jugar a encontrar relaciones con nuestra profesión. Mapeando cruces entre disciplinas, buscando interacciones reales o de fantasía,... puede ser muy divertido...

Que bueno que somos tantos!

un beso
Uchi

Margit wrote:
We are excited about the collaboration that can occur when people experience their embodiment, and gain new insight into the physical environment by movement research. Scientists and artists have so much in common, as investigators who frame and carry through projects to completion- yet the distinctions are infinitely fascinating, too! CI is a form which investigate our senses and perceptions, and at best is an exploration of

experiential physics. As ecologists, you are most likely going into habitats, be they urban or rural and interacting- we are so interested to learn hpw the physicality piece offers new insight to your work. Good luck, and enjoy!

In terms of the larger research, a big deal is the whole question of how we define science, and what the limits of that are, and the value of clarity, as well as expansion. the festival operates under the assumption that there are many kinds of sciences-and foremost here at SEEDS, we were developing hybridized research projects - first person research (see Eugene Gendline and Don Johnson's great article ---- on first person science). And there are many others - the "soft" sciences, the somatic practices - some, like Feldenkrais Method, directly find their structure from the scientific method, and others, such as Body Mind Centering, are utilizing anatomical principles and ecological approaches into a more kaleidoscopic experiential journey-

What I always say is that Science has a lot of artists and somaticists, because there is a history of peer review (therefore public discourse), and institutional support - what it does is help define the forms. There was a lot of debate in our conceptualizing of the festival - how do we make space for the problems of the history of institutions? The implicit racism, the exclusivity, economic and social injustice that is embedded in the realm of Science- our hope was to be a part of redefining...

And what we found was that so many artists are also scientists! Either academically trained and professional, or auto-didactic, and sometimes both or neither, yet scientists nonetheless. I always notice how artists love to work with scientists, and scientists, when the opportunity arises, are amazed by the depth of the artistic research process. We want to extend these spaces, and make these new constellations have social relevance.

Some of our most interesting projects at SEEDS were the interdisciplinary ones, where scientists and somaticists teamed up, where permaculture activists and architects and activists got

to experience a somatic practice to inform their work, and these projects in a way caused the most insurrectionary acts. There were also these invisible moments that developed- they arised - i guess these are the seeds planted - we watched them grow, and some bloom.

The garden as a metaphor- cultivation, biodiversity keeps it strong (corn beans and squash- the three sisters of the iriquois nation and many indigenous farming cultures). There is much more to learn.

Download

August 18, 2008

It's the day after SEEDS' last day. I seem to be tired- in the middle of cooking eggs I sit down after wondering about how to prepare the onions...and then notice it is 30 minutes later. Things like that are indicators of my state, feedback that I can translate into words, like "tired".

One of the fascinating aspects of SEEDS for me was the human time. So many people so many days straight. I thought I would need to get away, but instead it was generative - I felt in fact regenerated by the momentum of folks around me in projects that made them engage with their environment and living body. The Festival was long enough that it had a whole bunch of eras. - these were demarcated aso clearly by the geologists - each step and analogy for millions and thousands of years, each rock the expression of a history. - timespace shows us the moent by revealing the past.

In my first era, in which I was studying with Prapto (among many other things!), he mentioned re-membering, and spoke of memory as

a potential for connecting with one's own bodystory. Truly integrating the past. Right now, in this post-production haze, it is more like those chaotic dreams in the bardic transitions- my dreams in the transitions tend to be quite full of adventure, with people and images and stories from many eras of my life and memory coming together like an adventure story. This is the night life. Here in the waking life, the same- many re-memberings of life outside of SEEDS, of folks from so many eras of my life come in the form of memory.

Elegua, legba, Eshu is the name of the protector of the crossroads and travels. Good to call on you now, may you help us with the integration of the multiplicity.

The whole event had a resolution kind of feeling- all the funniness with people managed to find what it needed to part. May this festival benefit the many who came through it. And I look forward to finding new energy (green hermeticism) - alchemical transformations into some more clarity and insight about It All.

still

August 6, 2008

taking a day off. living in this sense of still recently.... much syncretizes to bring it so. Yesterday we brought Suprapto and Marilin to the train station, Wassaic, NY- there they were, we so in this thing together, in the car, at the terminal, him smoking kretek, the smell an atmosphere, a place to live in.....then the door whooshes close (you know that one- when the train slides closed) and poof - gone. Which one's the dream? A kind of still, somehow, the single image next to the next. Change.

Next door there is karen in her Pause lab, all the many ways there are to pause; to call it, to breathe it, to take it, take it in,

alongside our last class where we went by the stream. What is it to be still by the creek, like andang andang a bug that rests on water, not as a stone, but in the atmosphere of flowing and movement of stillness. It was a beautiful end. end.

pause
pause in the SCI ART panel last night. just here and there a call to experience one's own place and more- so much moving, always, since we are alive, always there is movement, yet, to slow down, as if approaching still.

And, in our presentations, we showed what we had been working on in the prayer of the butterfly, In our circle group, I had the experience of moving from my own position, feeling this sense of my own place in fully being present with being seen- no recoiling. There was this deep stillness and time warped- and through this practice which was not directly about performance, a piece of the puzzle came through, and I got a new link and a deepening of my pwn practice which can carry through living as well as through performance. To be in this place, where rather than clinging or hooking or working to connect, I dance from my own place. my mind cleared then, and there was the kind of presence, there, in which i felt something grow and remain, sustain.

yesterday was wednesday

July 31, 2008

Yesterday, Andrew Faust took us walking on the trail up Deer Hill, showing some things along the way, first tree identification - you can tell Earthdance was a sheep pasture as recently as 70 years ago. The large stone walls, remove just the big ones for sheep, the smaller stone walls were for more use in agriculture (need a more thorough removal), young trees at the beginning of the trail,

later into older ones. The lifespan of a tree is often seen as twice as long as its death- the role and *life of a tree doubles, if you include all its activity after dying - after it falls, the (uh oh- words:) myceum/myco-fungus/not-quite-mushroom grows on the fallen wood and transfers information in the form of chemical shifts -- (and mushrooms are fruits!). He told us some very practical work we could do at Earthdance - projects to create capital (wildcrafting), showed us where a little spring was on our path and how we could dig it up to relieve water pressure lower down.....it makes a little drinking spot for the animals, or we could even create a tubing-encatchment system and utilize the water lower down !

In Prapto's class, we have been working with so many different elements, but a main one that is being set up is working with the three realms: "circle" - moving in praying and bowing; "oval" - moving to purify, getting connected to nature, one's personal ethnicity, "square" - relational, human, dialog/dialectic- where you move in conversation. Oh, I do simplify, but it's ok, since I am a student here....we were asked to choose a realm, which we will focus on over the rest of our days in the workshop, and then show to the rest of the festival. Decision-making- phew!...which one to settle into, where did i want to stay for a while- do I pick based on what is challenging, on what feels familiar? there are so many ways - in the end, i found that i just rose up- not an impulse, more like ...this.

Unfortunately, I was too tired to see all of the film festival, but what i did was wonderful- short pieces from a bunch of different aesthetics- one so clear and tidy and clarified and staged, and other, the chimera, about energy, itself.

I like bumping into or walking by or being in the conversations that come up from the personal work as it interconnects with the shared Festival activities...some incredible research in these

spaces; people bring of themself, and in this environment, it permeates, is crosses, the dialog takes hold and it is growing.

This is more than i ever imagined in a way, after all this planning and working, here we get to be together in dialog.

Gratitude

first day, second day, line --- > to point .

July 29, 2008

Public. This is public. This is daunting to enter the text here, in the face of the immediatism, another here. In these few short days, I've gone through a whole bunch of shifts, and so had the weather- from stormy, clapping thunder under heavy sky wet ground rain into this morning here, the sun as if forever here, with the birds in this little valley amidst the woodlands singing. They sing here most mornings, and I have the pleasure today of projecting a future with birds for the ones ahead.

SEEDS - we planted some and here we are- watching the little sprouts- like a garden, some unfurl before the others, others yet to plant. It's that multiplicity thing. we all learn at such different rates. In Prapto's workshop, I was so surprised to find my dark stormy mood which always hits in a longer learning process come so early, and hit so strong and then pass. It would be obvious to say, yet I will- it was like the weather. Yesterday I couldn't tell- why had it passed, so that I could just be in the movement, and remember how to start to listen to others in dancing....

Last night i barely slept- it was so unusual - the kind where the dreams arwe so strong they kept on waking me up - i was agitated so that any coda or syntax shift or turn of events in the stories

then made me awake in the dark in bed. over and over this process of not really getting into it and through it, resting on the cushion embracement of the bed- more like sifting through my mind, and then any once in a while a remembrance to notice my breathing - a late-night trick I have developed as I work here at Earthdance and the day enters into the dark of night. A meeting in which (no doubt) I felt the implications of my actions and shortcomings for the next project here- oh, how I wish to be here, and not to have the meetings, and yet it's clearly a part of this for me, the ebb and flow between the experiences, and to seek for the dialog with peace.

enuff for now...